

DOTMLPF Implications for an Operational Army National Guard

by

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United States Army War College
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Abstract

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This research paper examines the impacts on DOTMLPF (Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and education, Personnel, and Facilities) of the Army National Guard (ARNG) developing more operational capabilities. Although the ARNG is currently postured with some operational capacity while also serving as a strategic reserve - the scope of this research is focused on those impacts and changes inherent in becoming more operational. The rebalancing of national instruments of power to the Pacific Theater and recent updates to Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 3.0 Unified Land Operations are also considered. This paper addresses only the Army Guard while acknowledging the relevance to the other Reserve Components. The process of developing operational capabilities for the reserve components is on-going with the implications not yet completely understood.

DOTMLPF Implications for an Operational Army National Guard

Prevailing in today's wars requires a Reserve Component that can serve in an operational capacity – available, trained, and equipped for predictable routine deployment well into the future.

—2010 Quadrennial Defense Review¹

Since 2001 the U.S. military has been involved in sustained combat operations in the middle-east while maintaining worldwide commitments. During that time the Army National Guard has transformed both practically and philosophically, from a strategic reserve of last resort to providing full spectrum operational capability to the nation.² The Commission on the National Guard and Reserves (CNGR) came to the conclusion in its final report to Congress in January 2008 that the nation needs an operational reserve. The commission, chartered by Congress, was to assess the reserve components and to recommend changes to ensure that they are organized, trained, equipped, compensated, and supported to best meet the needs of U.S. national security.³ The first of the commission's six conclusions found that the nation requires an "operational reserve" and that neither Department of Defense (DoD) nor Congress have had serious discussions or debate and have not formally adopted the "operational reserve".⁴ As a result of the findings and recommendations of the CNGR, DoD responded in 2008 with publication of Directive 1200.17, "Managing the Reserve Components as an Operational Force." The Directive specifies that the reserve components are to provide operational capabilities and strategic depth to meet U.S. defense requirements across the full spectrum of conflict.⁵ This emphatically established the Reserve operational force concept within a policy framework. This research paper describes some of the impacts of this decision and provides a few recommendations for success.

DoDD 1200.17 is prompting action by the Services to continue working towards greater reserve operational capability. DoD continues to explore the potential to redefine the role of the reserve components for both domestic and overseas operations.⁶ Besides developing implementation plans for the majority of the commission's recommendations, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates also issued DoD Directive 1235.10, *Activation, Mobilization, and Demobilization of the Ready Reserve*, November 26, 2008, and DoD Instruction 1235.12, *Accessing the Ready Reserves*, February 4, 2010, which collectively enshrined the principles and policies required to sustain the Reserve Component as an operational force.⁷

Maintaining and increasing operational capability will impact all measures related to readiness, even with the highest level of organizational support. Negative impacts need to be identified, understood and mitigated early before degrading capabilities. Strengthening the NGs capability is encouraged by the DoD as reliance on the Guard and Reserve continues to grow. The DoD has identified the following goals for the Reserve Components as an operational force:

1. Provide vital capabilities for meeting national defense objectives
2. Provide forces to large scale conventional campaigns
3. Augment and reinforce Active Components appropriately
4. Balance the stress across the Total Force
5. Preserve the readiness gains made over the last decade
6. Spread the burden of defense across a larger portion of the citizenry
7. Preserve the all-volunteer force.⁸

Achieving these goals for the NG and maintaining operational capability will impact Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and education, Personnel, and Facilities (DOTMLPF). The process of becoming operational is being cultivated in an environment of budgetary uncertainty and declining demand for forces as the war in Afghanistan ends. As a result, impacts to DOTMLPF have received little attention, perhaps owing to the belief that they will somehow take care of themselves or be so minor as to be inconsequential. A materiel solution alone will not be enough to ensure success because DOTMLPF is affected by so many other variables. The stated DoD goals for the operational reserve force can be attained if negative impacts are overcome and the resources and leadership are provided for the long haul.

Preserving and Enhancing ARNG Capabilities

The focus of this paper is on the Army National Guard. References to the 'Guard' should not be considered synonymous with other 'Reserve Components (RC)' including the Air National Guard. While much of the same law and policy apply to all Reserve Components, the Guard is unique with respect to Title 32 responsibilities and State command relationships. The National Guard and other Reserve forces of the United States were organized, manned, and equipped historically to serve as a strategic reserve. The Armed Forces Reserve Act of 1952 established the reserve components as a strategic reserve to be mobilized in times of crisis.⁹ Obtaining operational capabilities in the Reserve Components is adding to that basic role.

The Army National Guard is the largest reserve component with current end strength at 358,200, comprising a capable and substantial force structure. It is organized and equipped to fit seamlessly into Army order of battle for sustained land operations. The Guard's State responsibilities impact in minor ways its use as an

operational force. For instance, at any given time, States may be using significant numbers of troops for natural disasters under command of the Governor. The Guard's leadership fully supports more operational capabilities. They have repeatedly endorsed the development of these capabilities both to maintain combat readiness and for more frequent and significant participation in national defense.

Achieving higher readiness and performing at the level of operational capability envisioned by DoD requires a comprehensive approach to rectify deficiencies within the limits of a declining budget, current legal constraints and policy obstacles. Current national fiscal policies will severely limit discretionary spending with overall defense readiness likely to decline significantly.

The best method of measuring operational capability is by closely tracking readiness levels. If the Guard is to shoulder a larger share of routine deployments and remain prepared to quickly augment a sizeable conventional operation, then Congress and DoD cannot allow readiness to drop below a certain point. Where that point might be is not clear. DoD's FY2013 budget indicates that it will maintain the end strength of the National Guard but does not address readiness or force structure. Force structure and end strength are not the same nor do they equal readiness. Readiness is the key to success of any operational force.

Valuable experience, gained through repeated combat deployments over the past decade, is helping ensure success of the Reserve operational force. The Guard and Reserve currently have high percentages of combat veterans and prior active duty personnel in the ranks. This experience will decline significantly and rather soon if the Guard is put back on the shelf as a strategic reserve, whether deliberately or through

lack of resources. Preserving and enhancing Guard and Reserve capabilities is critical as Army end strength decreases from 570,000 to 490,000 soldiers by 2017¹⁰, returning to approximately the 2001 level. Given this drawdown, an unexpected requirement for operational forces would place immediate responsibility on the National Guard, with its end strength holding steady through 2017. Preserving and enhancing Guard and Reserve operational capabilities is not the beginning of a definitive ways, means rebalance to address the budget but a way to take best advantage of current assets. It is indicative of an expanding role for the National Guard but not a new role.

Neither the current directives nor the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) have specified any new roles and missions for the National Guard. Increasing Reserve capability is exerting a positive effect upon national defense and the men and women who make up all seven Reserve Components. Everyone appreciates being a contributing member of an organization. Ultimately, utilizing reserve forces to best advantage increases the overall capability and capacity of the United States to defend its interests.¹¹ Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 3.0 *Unified Land Operations* and the national strategic rebalancing to the Pacific region also affect the operational development and use of the Guard and Reserves. Identifying and addressing impacts to DOTMLPF and these other two issues promptly and effectively will help achieve national defense objectives.

Defining Operational

DoD recommends that the terms 'operational reserve' and 'strategic reserve' no longer be used in reference to developing Reserve Component operational capabilities due to confusion and miscommunication.¹² 'Strategic Reserve' is not defined in Joint Publication (JP) 1-02. The term "operational reserve" in JP 1-02, refers to "an

emergency reserve of men and/or materiel established for the support of a specific operation".¹³ This typically pertains to the operational or tactical level of war and would not fit current understanding of the Reserve operational force at the strategic level. The definition also omits women. This paper proposes a more descriptive term be applied such as: operational 'force,' 'capacity' or 'capability' and will use those terms throughout. Army units will likely be considered operationally ready or having adequate operational capability when they are in the available pool of the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) cycle (See Chart page 11). A Reserve unit in the available pool should also be ready to deploy with promptness similar to the active force. ARFORGEN sequentially raises units to the highest readiness potential for a one year period. During that year, they are either prepared to deploy immediately for emergencies or actually deployed on missions that were pre-planned and budgeted. Because operational capacity within the National Guard will not include all units and personnel at all times, designing an affordable, balanced and appropriate ARFORGEN method is vitally important.

Using the Guard and Reserve in an operational capacity is a significant alteration to strategic employment. This transition is, in effect, a gradual change in national strategic planning. Using the Reserves in this way is not a doctrinal change in the character or conduct of U.S. warfighting but rather, it is an expansion of the current responsibilities and roles within a different legal and procedural framework. The development of greater operational capability will foster more frequent, long term and diverse use of Guard and Reserve forces. Additionally, there is new authority to mobilize reservists at the Service Secretary level, described in detail later in the paper.

Reserve Operational Capability is Not Optional

Adjusting to an “operational reserve” is not an option according to The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). In its 2006 report, *The Future of the National Guard and Reserves*, CSIS finds that “employing the Reserve Component as part of the operational force is mandatory and not a choice. The Center determined DoD cannot meet today’s operational requirements without drawing significantly on the Reserve Component.”¹⁴ The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan validated the use of Reserve Components for operational missions, especially as rotational forces for persistent low-intensity conflicts. They were proven as ready, easily integrated, and competent combat units indistinguishable from Active Component (AC) forces when given the training and equipment necessary for the mission. AC forces will retain the role and capability for immediate response for full spectrum operations because of the time it takes to mobilize reserve forces. Condensing the time required for mobilization and deployment is crucial and achieved primarily through increased readiness. This requires all parties involved to work closely on shared interests associated with funding levels, end strength and Active and Reserve force structure mix.

The Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs led a comprehensive study that identified the best ways to incorporate the stated objectives of the 2010 QDR into National Military Strategy.¹⁵ The key objective of the report, published 5 April 2011, was how the Reserve and National Guard could be “...vibrant...seamlessly integrated... trained, mobilized and equipped for predictable routine deployments...well into the future.”¹⁶ The findings and recommendations of their report are leading to changes in law, policy, and strategy. Consequently, the DoD is involved in shaping and programming systemically to

establish the right conditions for better ‘operational’ capability in the Reserve Components. DoD recognized the Services for making tremendous strides in the deployment and use of their Reserve Components since 2001 and is encouraging them to continue institutional changes on their own initiative.¹⁷

In conjunction with the development of reserve capability, the AC is preparing for the transition to a more peacetime oriented operational tempo. The uncertainty over future demand for land forces is also a factor prompting development of operational capacity within the Guard. The AC usually downsizes after every war because it expanded during the war. The current situation is playing out in similar fashion with a clear direction set by Congress and the Administration to reduce Army and Marine forces added since 2007. The cuts will not be an abrupt demobilization but a gradual planned decrease to pre-9/11 levels, barring any unforeseen event that might precipitate reversal. The decrease in end strength is driven mostly by the need to cut defense spending to help reduce overall Federal budget deficits and the perceived lack of an immediate and sizable threat. The effort to increase reserve capabilities currently has wide support from both Congress and DoD with the idea of preserving capability while reducing funding. Any changes to Guard organizational structure, mission alignments, training and equipment levels directly affects capacity for both domestic response and homeland defense. Prudent decisions regarding the allocation of dwindling resources are fundamental to success.

Rebalancing to the Pacific

The national strategic rebalance to the Asia-Pacific Theater will scarcely affect reserve operational capability. Administration officials have announced they will “of necessity rebalance [the U.S. military] toward the Asia-Pacific region.”¹⁸ This

“rebalancing” has some impacts that go beyond the announced plans for the military. Initial U.S. deployments to Australia and Singapore are negligible. The Military share of the total rebalance effort, when considered in the overall national scheme, appears small compared to the other three instruments of national power: Diplomatic, Information, Military and Economic (DIME). One of the implications which is reflected in the January 2012 “Strategy Review,” has been to minimize cuts in the size of the Navy, with U.S. force reductions focused, instead, very heavily on Army and Marine ground forces.¹⁹

The National Guard State Partnership Program (SPP) complements the rebalancing effort. When considered in the context of DIME, the SPP is patently an operational capability. By design and function, SPP supports mil-to-mil initiatives of interest to Combatant Commanders. The SPP helps build trust and cooperation with partner nations, thereby setting the foundation for other programs such as Theater Security Cooperation. For example, the Oregon National Guard recently signed a partnership agreement with Vietnam while Alaska is considering expanding its partnership with Mongolia. Both of those countries may become significant Pacific area partners.²⁰ Training opportunities during short-term deployments for a few personnel, such as with the SPP, are of significant overall value even if limited in scope. Since the military portion of the rebalancing initiative is relatively light, impacts to DOTMLPF and operational capabilities within the Guard appear minor.

Key Enabling Legislation

The fundamental drawbacks of employing the reserve components as an operational force are the time and costs associated with mobilization. Authority previously relied exclusively on a Presidential call-up which necessitated sufficient

justification to ensure approval and funding by Congress. Unplanned mobilizations also add costs to the federal budget. If the mobilization were small and of short duration DoD could be forced to shift funds from other programs to pay the costs. These circumstances changed in January 2012 with enactment of Assured Access Authority (10 U.S.C. §12304 series). This legislation altered mobilization authority to somewhat overcome those impediments and to provide more options for employing Reserve Components. This was a decisive change and the keystone enabling legislation that will provide a new and innovative way to maintain operational capability.

The new law contains two portions. The first addresses domestic response and provides the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) with authority to activate Reserve Components under Federal command when a Governor requests Federal assistance. This is not likely to occur with the exception of a catastrophic disaster. Governors prefer using their State's National Guard forces and retaining direct command of the operations. The second portion of the law is the key to unlocking the Reserve Components. It grants service Secretaries involuntary activation authority for preplanned missions for units to support a combatant commander for up to 365 days. No more than 60,000 reservists can be activated DoD-wide at any one time and the cost of the activation must be part of the Budget request. Therefore, units will receive about two year's advance notice of mobilization under this law since the cost must be funded in the POM cycle.²¹ This aligns well with the ARFORGEN model intended to annually increase Reserve Component unit readiness levels over a five year cycle. It should be noted that the ARFORGEN model and how the process works is constantly being adjusted.

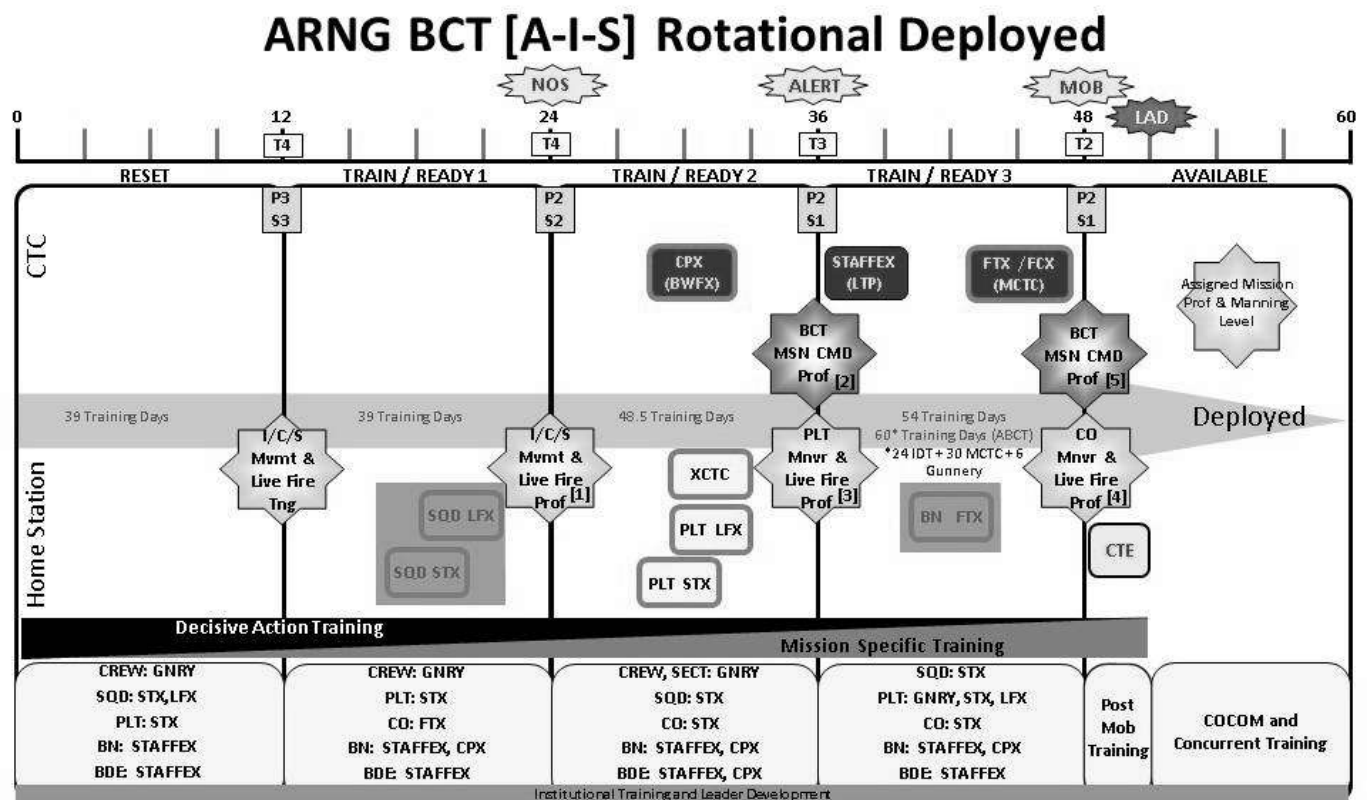


Figure 1. ARFORGEN EXAMPLE - Army National Guard Brigade Combat Team²²

DOTMLPF Impacts of Reserve Operational Capability

Operational capability requires the foundational activities associated with recruiting, equipping and training to maintain a high level of readiness. Operational capacity will be achieved chiefly by administrative and budgetary actions that increase readiness appropriate for deployment with doctrine basically unaffected. Although significant to the reservists on a personal level, being in an operational force will affect DOTMLPF in real but subtle ways. The research shows that DoD has carefully considered many of the ramifications. They have taken steps to minimize some of the disruptions and pitfalls, although exactly how becoming operational will function is not

perfectly clear. The following are the key findings from this research and some recommendations to improve the process.

Doctrine

Increasing operational capability in the Guard and Reserve has little or no impact on Army doctrine, nor does current doctrine affect the development of reserve operational capacity. Army Doctrine Publication (ADP 3-0) UNIFIED LAND OPERATIONS, October 2011, serves as the common doctrinal reference for the Army. This publication describes warfighting doctrine in the same language for all Army forces without distinguishing between the three Army components. ADP 3-0 focuses on the employment of land power regardless of whether those forces are comprised of active or reserve components. However, participation in any operation depends on the forces employed being adequately trained and equipped for the mission.

The Army's embrace and inclusion of Mission Command - where initiative, innovation and decision making are encouraged at every command level based on the overall commander's intentions - has the potential to be a significant adjustment for the Army. Guard leaders, on the other hand, are more dispersed (3000 locations in 54 States and Territories), exercising something akin to Mission Command on a daily basis. They should be somewhat more familiar with how this style of command works and have little trouble adjusting. The question becomes: Is Mission Command a doctrinal change or a new desirable leadership quality? This paper suggests that it is one of several different methods of command and not a doctrinal development.

Organization

The organizational structure of the Guard does not require significant changes to serve in a role with greater operational capacity. The annual Total Army Analysis will likely recommend appropriate but minor changes for the Guard to balance the AC/RC mix and to better support the National Military Strategy. Operational capability in the Guard and Reserve neither paves the way for further cuts to active duty Army forces nor is it the cause of the current drawdown. The Obama Administration has set the course by issuing plans to reduce the size of the total active-duty force—slated to be 1.42 million at the end of FY2012—by 21,600 personnel in FY2013 and by a total of 102,400 by the end of FY2017.²³ Consistent with the new policy of avoiding prolonged, large-scale peacekeeping operations, most of that multi-year reduction of 92,000 would come from the Army and Marine Corps. In effect, this plan would remove from the force the same number of personnel that were added beginning in 2007 to sustain deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan.²⁴

The baseline force is designed to support the defense strategy objectives enumerated in the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR). The four primary objectives are to “prevail in today’s wars, prevent and deter conflict, prepare to defeat adversaries and succeed in a wide range of contingencies, and preserve and enhance the All-Volunteer Force.”²⁵ The fundamental building blocks of the Army National Guard to support those four objectives are the Divisions and Brigades. The present structure of the Guard is built on eight divisions, 28 brigade combat teams, eight combat aviation brigades, and two Special Forces groups scattered across the country in almost every community. In addition, the combat service and service support structure provides the

Army with the capability and flexibility it needs and still provides State governors the capabilities they need.²⁶ More operational capability to meet the demands of the geographic and functional Combatant Commanders²⁷ may perhaps change how the Guard is managed but not necessarily its organization.

In 2006, Reserve Component leaders all agreed that they were inadequately funded for the levels of operational use identified by Service and DoD Plans.²⁸ Current funding is also in question given the potential missions and planned budget cuts. The uncertain future demand for forces is a planning problem for everyone involved. All this will complicate routine use of the operational reserve as originally intended if flexibility is not built into the force structure. Without sustained funding, the Reserve Components cannot develop readiness to the level needed regardless of end strength or force structure. Currently, the United States cannot go to war even on a moderate scale without substantial mobilization of the reserve components; this situation was planned and built into the organizational design of the military at large and the Army in particular and usually is referred to as the Abrams doctrine.

Cost-effectiveness is an attractive attribute of the Reserve Components. The RC cost essentially the same as similar AC units when mobilized, and the costs are additive to the budget if not anticipated and planned for in advance. But since the Reserve Components organizations are funded annually, the additive costs are only the difference in what was planned for and what must be added for mobilization – typically two thirds more money. Therefore, the Reserve Components are less costly operating approximately 40 days a year but just as costly when mobilized. The real benefits of the Guard and Reserve are being dual-use and the flexibility to expand quickly and avoid an

immediate resort to conscription thus preserving the All-Volunteer Force. Mobilized reserves are usually paid for with Overseas Contingency Operations accounts and not from the base budget of the Services.

To take advantage of these benefits, DoD needs a reliable methodology that furnishes more precise cost estimates for both the AC and RC - per soldier, per unit, etc. The initial indications are that a cost-effective Reserve Component can bring value, flexibility and efficiencies in expanding and contracting the total force in predictable deployment situations, as well as in meeting unforeseen emergent requirements.²⁹ Transitioning the Strategic Reserve into an Operational Force (Army Initiative 4) is one of seven initiatives initially spearheaded by former Army Chief of Staff Gen. George W. Casey Jr. The objective is to continue transitioning both the National Guard and Army Reserve from primarily a strategic reserve into an operational force. Annual mission assignments are apparently being left up to the Services, which posture for and respond to Combatant Command requirements. Guard operational capability, managed properly, should lower overall personnel and operating costs and, with the right equipment provide more efficient and effective use of defense assets as well as contribute to sustainability of both the Active and Reserve Components.”³⁰ This transitional period will take several years. Therefore, no major organizational changes to the Guard should occur before 2018 when the current drawdown is complete.

Training

The Guard currently has a higher overall level of readiness than normal, attained primarily from repeated mobilizations and the Army’s recent acquisition efforts. However, one weekend a month and two weeks a year is simply not enough time for Guard and Reserve units, in or near the ARFORGEN available pool, to attain and

maintain adequate readiness. Reserve Component units that are part of the operational force are fully integrated into the deployment cycle by being equipped and trained to the level of readiness normally achieved only by the AC. The objective is Reserve Components that are manned, trained and equipped for recurrent mobilization and for employment as cohesive units. Training impacts are the crucial determining element in being operationally ready. Training brings together the personnel and equipment to create specific military capabilities. The leading problem to being validated as operational is the limited training time allocated to maintaining readiness. This is a problem not only on core warfighting skills but also for individual and collective training. More training time is needed.

Equipment can be provided rather quickly but training significantly affects the viability of an operational force. Maintaining operational skill levels within the Guard requires training resources that are currently limited by both time and location. The Guard is allocated a limited amount of training time per person per year. Adding training time means adding costs for pay and benefits as well as expenses associated with operating training facilities and ranges. Increasing spending in this area is likely to be difficult but is essential. The constrained budget environment will have the greatest impact on operational capabilities by limiting training and equipment.

To achieve operational capacity, more unit training time, seats in formal Army schools, use of simulators and other novel training opportunities are all needed. Increasing the number of training days for those units in the last two years of the ARFORGEN cycle is a must. Maintaining combat skills are particularly difficult at brigade level and higher for collective and organizational tasks. It is practically

impossible to accomplish all individual and small unit training that is required in the time currently allotted. The dispersal of larger Guard units across one or more States also impedes collective training. Providing appropriate training ranges capable of supporting the larger units is vital during annual training periods and should be a high priority. Military Occupational Specialty Qualification (MOSQ) will only improve using a Total Army approach to training and education.

Materiel

An inadequately equipped Reserve Component cannot serve in an operational role. In today's environment, equipment is becoming closely associated with, and almost a correlation to, combat power. Fortunately for the Guard and its expanding role, the best improvement in equipment readiness in several decades is underway. For the past few years, the Guard has been receiving new equipment and in generally the same quantity as the Active Component. The Guard should be able to fulfill all the requirements of an operational reserve if this equipping strategy continues. Army Doctrine Publication 3.0 doesn't address equipment/materiel issues. Always having or obtaining better state-of-the-art equipment than our potential adversaries is an assumption. We can't afford that assumption since the best equipment is critical to success in modern warfare. The materiel impact of creating more operational capabilities in the Guard requires comparable equipment to the AC and in adequate quantities to units entering the available pool of the ARFORGEN cycle. This fact cannot be ignored or circumvented if operational capability is to be achieved on the scale needed.

The Guard has demonstrated that effective equipping, combined with adequate facilities, organizational structure and training for national defense, also serves to better

prepare the Nation for domestic responses.³¹ The Army will soon make challenging decisions with respect to equipment procurement and distribution. Provision of adequate equipment to the Guard is vital to meet both the global responsibilities of national defense and the requirements of the States for disaster response.

Compared with the February 2011 plan, the Operation and Maintenance request for FY2013 was reduced by only 3%, while a 15% reduction was imposed on the Procurement accounts.³² This appears encouraging with respect to readiness, until the low equipment on-hand percentages in the National Guard are considered. Procurement cuts will affect readiness in the Guard immediately, directly and significantly. Those units going into the ARFORGEN available pool must be appropriately equipped without necessitating extensive cross-leveling, which could break several units just to make one whole. Developing operational capabilities within the National Guard has implications that go beyond fine-tuning policy or designing new processes. Year-long deployments are accomplished repeatedly by the Guard but are never routine and were only somewhat predictable and required enormous cross-leveling efforts. Besides adequate equipment, the Guard will need provision of ancillary materiel such as ammunition, fuel and spare parts. These operations and maintenance areas cannot be ignored. If left inadequately funded, this materiel issue will significantly hinder getting to those higher readiness levels.

Leadership and Education

AC and RC school capacity is not optimal and could potentially degrade National Guard readiness if not addressed in the next few years. Other impacts are an expected modification to home-station training and pre-deployment training.³³ Under current circumstances, it typically takes about 90 days for pre-deployment training, which is too

long for an operational force. The operational demands of recent deployments created a backlog for Professional Military Education (PME) in both the officer and noncommissioned officer ranks. Deploying Guard personnel require the same educational deferments provided to AC personnel or their developmental education and morale will suffer. The One Army School System is designed to support the total force and should operate without distinction between AC and RC.

Assessing demand factor for the future is difficult or impossible. Real-world mission deployment opportunities may become rare without an ongoing conflict. Rotational deployments of any kind, especially overseas, help significantly in the development of quality leaders. Without regular and relevant deployments, the Guard could become an operational force without the prerequisite skills honed during the mobilization and deployment processes. It is those deployments, combat or otherwise, that produce experienced leaders. There is simply no substitute for the kind of hands-on education and direct leadership experience gained during a deployment.

Personnel

Developing Reserve operational capability is supposed to help sustain support for the All-Volunteer Force, according to DoD. The reasoning goes that the reserve force is spread throughout the United States and closer to the community than the AC. However, it is questionable that a more operational Guard will correlate to support for the All-Volunteer Force. The Guard is widely dispersed and deeply connected with the communities where units are located while historically being all volunteers. The Guard becoming more operational will not add much, if any additional support for the All-Volunteer Force. The National Guard recruits the bulk their personnel from areas located near training sites and Armories and that will not change. This occasionally

presents a problem based on the local economic conditions and the inclination of the citizens to volunteer and to reenlist. In that respect, potential conscription into the AC would probably help Guard recruiting. There is intense pressure on Guard leadership up and down the organization to maintain end-strength both within individual units and on a statewide basis. Being operational and potentially deploying more often would place even greater emphasis on maintaining personnel strength within Guard units. There is also the added strain of maintaining higher readiness. A likely Guard impact of being operational is more personnel in-state cross-leveling during the 'available pool' year. There is no other way to fill out Guard manning rosters in the time available. Readiness is at risk if standards, as well as numbers, are not kept elevated, so the focus has to be on quality first without losing sight of the quantity needed. The AC drawdown will create opportunities for prior active duty personnel to move to the Reserve Components. This will help maintain, at lower cost, the skill levels of the RC for several years.

Employers and the families of reservists have accepted the hardships of war but have not fully anticipated the future 'peacetime' deployments that will be necessary for the Reserve operational force. The DoD needs a communication strategy, focused on the employers and families, to explain the continuing need to mobilize and deploy sizable numbers of reservists. The National Guard should concentrate on unit readiness based predominantly on deployability factors and accept the need to cross-level people as well as equipment. Employers may be the hardest sell regarding continued deployments. With the wars ending, employers have a get-back-to-normal attitude towards their reservist employees.

A relevant personnel implication of becoming more operational is in the area of National Guard Full Time Support (FTS). DoD should consider expanding the FTS personnel within the State Guard organizations. Current FTS (Active Guard and Reserve Personnel-AGR) manning is based on validated requirements developed in 1999 (re-validated twice since then) when the National Guard was considered a strategic reserve.³⁴ Active Duty for Operational Support (ADOS) personnel have been used to augment FTS but that funding is ending soon. It is reasonable to assume that continuing as an operational force with less than 70% of the required FTS is going to be difficult.³⁵

Facilities

Facilities requirements may be the least appreciated impact of moving to an operational reserve. The current pre-mobilization training facilities in use are indispensable to support continued reserve deployments. Facilities planners must also anticipate one or more new rounds of base realignment and closure (BRAC) as the Army reduces end strength.³⁶ The installations that support future force design with the best possible facilities must be kept open if only on a limited basis. The force projection platforms currently used by the National Guard have been essential to effective mobilization and deployment. The impact of closing deployment bases, used mainly by the National Guard, will hinder the ability to deploy. Other suitable facilities have not been identified. Completely shuttering these facilities when the last troops leave Afghanistan will impede efforts to maintain an operational force. Reestablishing this infrastructure at a later time will be costly and time consuming. A prudent alternative would be keeping the minimal staffing necessary to maintain the infrastructure and reduce capacity only so much as to meet future throughput. This 'keep the lights on

approach' would maintain the ability to scale up rather rapidly if needed. If the current facilities are not preserved, the question becomes: Where will National Guard forces conduct pre-deployment training?

Conclusion and Recommendations

Keeping even one fifth of the Guard and Reserve in a higher state of readiness will have a price tag attached. How much this will cost and the implications for DOTMLPF are not precisely understood. More research and analysis is needed to apply the right amount of resources to get the best results. The term 'operational reserve' should no longer be used in official correspondence or discussions. The terminology used in reference to building this capability in the Reserve Components requires specific clarification from DoD to reduce confusion and focus efforts. The term 'reserve operational force or capabilities' is suggested as more accurate and appropriate terminology in denoting the abilities of a unit to perform the role.³⁷ This distinction is needed to identify those units that are actually operational at any given time.

Analysis shows that DOTMLPF impacts of increasing Guard capabilities overall are minor and manageable. This change to greater capability is significant but it should not be considered revolutionary in nature or a new role for the Guard. It is a return to the nation's roots when the U.S. maintained much larger reserve forces than active forces and planned to take time necessary to mobilize before going to war. This still evolving operational capability does not transform who fights in war, what equipment is used or how the forces are arrayed in time and space on the battlefield.

Linking support for the All-Volunteer Force to greater reserve component operational capability should be discarded. The All-Volunteer Force has been successful, albeit costly, simply because conscription has not been required.

Volunteerism for the military is precariously situated between the urge to serve for a variety of reasons, such as patriotism or employment opportunities, and aversion to politically unpopular decisions regarding military action. This became evident during the war in Iraq when the Army lowered standards and offered large financial incentives to boost sagging enlistments. The public will support the troops but they may not want to join the military if the reasons for going to war are not justified and understandable, regardless of whether the RC is an operational force. One minor action that might increase support for the All-Volunteer Force would be to expand the Reserve Components by creating new units, especially in communities where none currently exist. The families and employers of reservists will maintain strong support for their members but will likely question long deployments during relatively peaceful periods.

The National Guard State Partnership Program should be maintained and expanded. SPP is an enabling capability that provides a critical exchange between the U.S. military and partner nations in a politically acceptable way providing mutual benefits. Although limited to small numbers of participants, it should be regarded as a low cost short-term deployment and training opportunity.

The Assured access act allowing mobilization for up to 60,000 Reserves a year will ensure both the responsibility and opportunity to exploit the capabilities of the Guard and Reserve and will help relieve stress on AC forces. This type of pre-planned use of the RC is unprecedented and represents a significant change in the way forces will be assigned missions in the future operational environment. Procedural and legal changes such as this show how sincerely determined the national leadership is in creating a true operational force that includes the RC. The Guard facilities used for mobilizing, training

and pre-deployment activities need preservation. Sharing of AC installations will create scheduling and over capacity issues but appears the only option.

Reserve operational capacity is becoming an integral part of the National Military Strategy. The Army Total Force Policy was signed on 4 September 2012, and is now guiding the further integration of the Guard and Reserve into the operational force. The adverse impacts of making the RC more operational are certainly not insurmountable but they must be examined and dealt with promptly. The keys to success in meeting the complex challenges of the future are developing the right leaders, properly training all Army soldiers, implementing sound doctrine and providing our troops with the best possible equipment³⁸ all in a cost-effective way. In doing so, our nations' security will not only be preserved but materially enhanced.

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